

THE QUIVER

Saturday, November 5, 1870.



"The brother and sister were silent for some seconds"—p. 66.

JOHN HESKETH'S CHARGE.

BY ALTON CLYDE, AUTHOR OF "UNDER FOOT," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER XII.—THE MORNING WALK.

"At last, Carrie."

"Yes, at last, Edward; thank you for waiting, like a good, docile creature; but I am afraid I have tired your patience."

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"Yes, perhaps you have a little; but it doesn't matter, as I haven't much on my hands this morning; besides, I prepared myself to wait. I always give a broad margin of indulgence on these

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occasions. I think it the best way to deal with you ladies."

The young lady laughed.

"Indeed, my wise brother. May I ask how, when, and where you acquired that important piece of knowledge, for you speak like one who has gained extensive experience?"

The young man coloured, and looked conscious as a schoolgirl, under the implied impeachment.

Caroline led the way, taking a path which wound round the lawn and diverged into a shrubbery, beyond which lay the more secluded part of the grounds, where she was fond of spending the summer mornings. The place justified her preference, for nature and art seemed to have done their best to make it a charming retreat. The choicest blooms that could be nursed into life under an English sky had been gathered in the varied tinted flower-beds with their carefully-kept borders, looking like belts of green velvet in the sun; and here and there were tiny fountains plashing into marble basins, where the fairies might have bathed.

The brother and sister had threaded the maze of winding paths until they were tired, when they stopped before one of the fountains near which was a rustic bench on which Caroline instantly sat down, inviting Edward to follow her example; but he preferred standing behind her, one hand carelessly resting on the back of the seat, and with the other cutting circles in the air with his slight walking-cane, that looked only like an elegant toy.

Caroline took off her garden hat, and dropped it carelessly on the grass at her feet, letting the sunlight fall upon her hair. Edward watched the warm gleams playing among its dusky coils, and thought what a pretty picture Carrie would make. Nothing could be more graceful than the effect of the crisp, fresh muslin that formed her morning toilet. Her appearance impressed him, as it always did, for he was proud of his handsome sister; that was one source of her influence over him; but the warm brotherly love that would have drawn her near his heart, was chilled by the awe in which he held her cynical opinions and sarcastic tongue. That morning he had reluctantly acceded to her request to accompany her in her walk, feeling very uncomfortable in the anticipation of the tête-à-tête conversation which he knew was in store for him. Her frigid treatment of John Hesketh had distressed him, and the meeting in the lane was not forgotten. He dreaded her introduction of the subject, and shrank from having to answer inquiries about Eva Ashton, for some intuitive feeling warned him they would not be asked in any spirit of friendliness towards the schoolmaster's daughter.

The brother and sister were silent for some seconds, Caroline apparently absorbed in contemplating the fountain with its sparkling cascade of water, which the sun seemed converting into a shower of glitter-

ing gems; but in reality the lady's thoughts were busy with far different subjects, and her mental pre-occupation was not to be traced to any admiring appreciation of the scene around her.

At last she roused herself, and, as Edward had been dreading, opened upon him a running fire of half-bantering remarks, each pointed with a meaning which he well understood.

"Upon my word, Edward, you seem to have made up your mind to be anything but an entertaining companion this morning. It would not require much arithmetic to sum up all you have said since we left the house; perhaps I ought to feel piqued at your want of attention."

The young man cast an expressive glance over his shoulder in the direction of the shrubbery; he was longing to make his escape, and was only restrained by his fear of offending Caroline.

"What do you mean, Carrie?"

"That you are disappointing me in what I consider a very essential element to the enjoyment of a walk—agreeable society. Surely, this does not belong to the margin of indulgences which you extend to ladies, or is it that you reserve for others the pleasant words which you cannot afford to waste upon your sister?"

Edward winced under her words.

"Nonsense, Carrie; I suppose we have both been silent for the same reason—because we had nothing to say; besides, just now you were in such a profound study that I should not have ventured to disturb you."

An incredulous smile curled round the lady's lips, as she said, "Thanks for your consideration, Edward; but with regard to having nothing to say, I don't think you often suffer from a deficiency of that kind; for instance, it could not have been so the other evening, when I met you in the village with your friends, for you were engaged in a very interesting conversation, and to judge from appearances fully sustaining your own part in it."

Edward said nothing, but affected to be intently absorbed in the ingenious feat of poising his cane on the tip of his finger.

She went on: "So that was Miss Eva Ashton. I must confess that I was not prepared to find you on such familiar terms with the young lady. Pray how did you first become acquainted with the family of the worthy schoolmaster, whom I suppose you class among the aristocracy of the village?"

Edward's face burned; he was not slow to appreciate that slighting allusion to his friends. He answered, somewhat sullenly, "I got to know them through John Hesketh, who was formerly a pupil of Mr. Ashton's."

"Ah! and that, I suppose, you consider a sufficient guarantee for their respectability."

"No guarantee is required, Caroline, for it is beyond question. Mr. Ashton is as true a gentleman as any about the neighbourhood."

"And his daughter as true a lady," added Caroline, with a low laugh, and a tone of irony that jarred unpleasantly on her brother's ears.

All the spirit he had in him was stung into self-assertion, and he seemed to cast off the power she had gained over him. The tone of his answer was as sarcastic as his own.

"You are right, and have truly described Miss Ashton; she is, and always will be, a lady, for she possesses those essentials which *circumstances* can never supply."

The colour faded from the face of the haughty girl, and astonishment kept her lips sealed. Could this be her yielding, easy-tempered brother, and to what could be ascribed the change? Was it possible that the reality was already beyond even her fears? Was he really in love with Eva Ashton, and ready to commit himself by an open declaration?

The thought was wormwood to her proud spirit. It should not go on if any influence of hers could hinder it. He must be saved from that folly, for the sake of the family honour that she held so dear, and for which she avowed herself willing to make any sacrifice on her own account.

She was prevented from making any reply by an unlooked-for interruption in the person of Lionel Elliott, who just then made his appearance on the scene. The interruption took Caroline by surprise, and, to her own annoyance, she betrayed it, as any other young lady might have done, by various little signs of perturbation which did not escape the observation of her brother.

He made a mental note of the phenomenon, and a resolution to watch his sister, at the same time felicitating himself on his own penetration, for he felt sure that he was on the verge of an important discovery.

CHAPTER XIII.

ENTRUSTED TO HIS CARE.

DAVID ASHTON welcomed his favourite with a hearty shake of the hand, and a cordial warmth that was very gratifying to the young mechanic. His appearance was a timely relief to the old man, and at once set at rest the nervous anxiety which had been painfully increased by the discovery that he had missed his way, and his fear of being too late for his appointment at the office of Messrs. Robinson and Co. A few words sufficed to explain how matters stood, and John Hesketh at once volunteered to be their escort for the rest of the way—an offer that was eagerly accepted.

"Thank you, John; I shall be glad of your company. I thought I could have found my way to every corner of the town, but building alters the look of places, and I am getting old and not so clear in my head as I used to be."

Then, as if the thought had suddenly occurred to him, he added, "But going with us will take up

your dinner-hour, and it's not right to let you throw away your time on us. If you would direct me, I think I might manage."

But John Hesketh would not hear of this arrangement, nor allow himself to be turned from his intention. He would have cheerfully sacrificed dinner, any day, to have secured the rare pleasure of walking through the streets with Eva Ashton, or the privilege of rendering a service, however slight, to her, or any whom she loved. The grandfather did not know this; he was glad to avail himself of the young man's good-natured offer of assistance out of his difficulty, but he credited it as a sacrifice made from motives of simple kindness.

It did not take long to bring them to the merchant's office, John Hesketh being familiar with certain of those invaluable short cuts. The old man had recovered his cheerfulness, still keeping firm to his resolution to spare Eva all knowledge of the real nature of his errand. It was his wish that she should have none but pleasant associations to recall about that day, and he succeeded in keeping well out of sight the care that gloomed up in the background. Neither of his companions guessed what an ordeal he was bracing himself to meet. Looking at the bright grey eyes and the fresh colour in the wrinkled cheeks, John Hesketh inwardly marvelled at the perfect physical strength of the fine old man.

The presence of the young mechanic removed what would have been an occasion of some perplexity to the careful grandfather, with regard to the disposal of his darling during the time that he would be engaged with the merchants. He was perfectly satisfied to leave her in John's care, for he shared all his son's high confidence in the young man.

"I hope, John, you will not be kept waiting long; perhaps I may get through my business sooner than I anticipate;" adding, with an anxious glance at Eva, "I'm afraid you'll be tired out, child; then your father will not be so willing to let you come to town again."

But she comforted him with one of her bright smiles, and the assurance that she was having a very pleasant day.

John's ready arm helped the old man up the steps, and he and Eva lingered until they saw him disappear through a door covered with green baize, at the end of the passage. Then they began the walk which they had agreed upon as the best manner of beguiling the interval of waiting. Hesketh paced on by the fair girl's side with his senses steeped in a delicious day-dream, in which all waking reality seemed lost, oblivious of everything, except that Eva Ashton had been entrusted to his care, and it might be the last time that the coveted responsibility should be his. Yet he walked along with a gravity of mien more befitting sober middle age, his talk rarely advancing beyond a few commonplace sen-

tences, spoken in a dry, constrained tone, utterly unlike his natural manner, and not very flattering to his companion. The awkward shyness, which usually placed him at a disadvantage in Eva's presence, seemed to grow upon him, confirming her private conviction that John Hesketh disliked girls, and only showed her civility for her father's sake. He might be very good, but he was certainly peculiar, and rather disagreeable—at least, according to her idea of an agreeable man; and here, by a sort of natural transition, her thoughts reverted to Edward Arden, as the most forcible contrast she could imagine. Her mind was still full of pleasant reminiscences of a certain twilight walk, not many evenings past. She stole a shy side-glance at the grave, thoughtful face by her side, which looked so dark and grim, almost forbidding it seemed to her, in comparison with the frank, handsome face and laughing blue eyes, to which—almost unknown to herself—her heart had given a secret shrine, and in her girlish wilfulness she drew an imaginary picture of what the present sombre walk would have been if John Hesketh could have given place to Edward Arden. Little did she know of the rich heart that would have counted it happiness to be able to lay at her feet its hoarded wealth of love and tenderness. He was dumb where he most longed to be eloquent, and she never guessed what it was that had put a seal on his tongue, for she had then no key to the locked fountains of that deep, strong nature.

She fell into the common error of misreading and misjudging what she did not understand, for her undeveloped character had no standard by which to measure other people's. She was lingering still on the border-land of girlhood with the mists of uncertainty shrouding the distant hills, and life's serious problems all unsolved before her, and it was only the full woman's heart, perfected by the tests of experience and trial, that could fitly respond to the strong man's love which John Hesketh had given, unknown to her, and almost unsuspected by himself until that night of self-revelation when he had waited at the church gate with Edward Arden.

That part of the town, sacred to commerce, had little attraction for Eva, who saw only a series of comparatively dull streets. She was secretly chilling under a sense of weariness and discomfort, and longing for her grandfather to make his appearance, while poor John vainly racked his brains to find amusing subjects of gossip, and struggling with the depressing consciousness of failure, found an hindrance in his very anxiety to please.

"You must find it very dreary living always in the town, Mr. Hesketh."

The sound of the formal name jarred upon him, it seemed to fix so coldly and clearly his exact position in relation to her. He could not help recalling the old days when he was a boy painfully earnest over his lessons, and the schoolmaster's little daughter

seemed to have a special interest in him, for she did not scruple then to lay her tiny hands confidently in his, and lisp his Christian name in her pretty childish way. He accepted, as something in the natural order of things, the change which advancing years had made. She continued, "It is nice just to come for a day's visit, but I could not bear to live here; it would seem so like a prison, being shut in from the fresh air and sunshine."

John Hesketh smiled a little sadly as he said, "We don't know what we can bear till we are tried." Eva was the name on his lips, and nearly spoken, but he checked himself in time, and substituted, "Miss Ashton," adding, "You are right, it is dreary sometimes—very different to life in the country; but we have our allotted places, and if yours lay here, in the busy hive of workers, I think you would fall into your sphere and do your duty."

It might be that his speech was too serious and thoughtful for the young girl's present mood, and she was inclined to rebel a little at the Mentor-like tone. She said nothing in reply, but studiously averted her eyes; thus it was that she did not see the new expression that broke like a sudden light over his face, as his look rested upon her. There was a threatened return of the old embarrassing silence between them, when a bright thought occurred to John. He remembered that they were within five minutes' walk of a square in which had recently been inaugurated a handsome monument to one of the benefactors of the town.

If Eva would like to see it they would have ample time to pay it a visit before her grandfather joined them.

She readily consented and they went.

"My dear, what a lovely face, do look! if I could only make a sketch of it! How fast that provoking Watson is driving; but I notice that he always does whenever I chance to want to look at anything particular."

The speaker was an impulsive, bright-faced little lady, leaning back in the luxurious cushioned seat of a well-appointed carriage, where she looked like a soft roll of fluttering lace and gleaming silk. Her companions were three young ladies. The eldest, to whom her remark had been particularly addressed, locked round quickly, and leaning slightly forward in the direction indicated by her friend, disclosed the handsome, haughty face of Caroline Arden to the astonished gaze of John Hesketh and Eva, who chanced to be standing on the kerb waiting the passing of the carriage that prevented their crossing the square.

He recognised the little lady as the wife of a wealthy banker of the town; the two younger ladies were her unmarried sisters. John caught the full look of Caroline's dark eyes as the carriage rolled by, but he and Eva might have formed part of the

building behind them for any sign of recognition which the young lady gave. His face burned. It was only a few days since he had met her in her father's house.

Eva gave an involuntary shiver. She knew very little of Caroline, only seeing her in the church, occasionally in the schools, and about the village; but that morning she received a new impression regarding her, and found herself wishing that she was anybody else but Edward Arden's sister.

And what of the carriage party? The banker's wife repeated her question: "Well, is it not a lovely face, fresh as a rosebud? I wonder who she is."

Caroline smiled, as she replied, "Excuse me, dear Mrs. Walford, I would rather not give my judgment

on the subject; but as you press the question, I cannot say that the face would have any particular attraction for me. Perhaps I am hard to please."

As she spoke, she subsided into her old attitude of careless grace, affecting to be absorbed with the adjusting of the costly bracelet that clasped her white arm; but she was thinking. Strange, to meet the schoolmaster's daughter in the town, out walking, and alone with John Hesketh. What an interesting item of news for her brother! How would he receive it?

"I could answer, if his temper was like my own," she said, mentally. "Well, I will tell him, and watch the result."

(To be continued.)

CHANGES.

BY THE REV. C. M. DAVIES, D.D.

II.—THE CHANGE OF DEATH.—JOS. xiv. 14.

AS the moon shows herself among the lesser lights of heaven, so does death appear amid the changes and chances of life; like in kind, but greater in degree; variable, like these, but coming around with orbit more defined and calculable; and, again, final as to them when it does come, since, as stars pale before the full moon, so do life's changes and chances end, when death, the last earthly change of all, suffuses and swallows them up.

And as it is our duty, above and apart from life's changes, to seek that which is changeless, unchangeable, so, *amidst* those changes, it is wise and well to discriminate and divide them according to their relative importance, their degrees of changefulness or the reverse. The merchant, or man of business, when summing up his gains and losses, and surveying his yet outstanding ventures, may be supposed to set aside at once some one as safe, certain, and to be preferred at all events. Others he ranks each in due gradation, but all secondary to this. Such, in spiritual matters—that is, in glancing with spiritual eye at worldly changes—should be the conduct of the Christian.

First of all, from life's changes he sets aside religion as the one thing settled and stable. That is of itself eligible, unchangeable, the one object to be pursued at all events; that demands first and chief attention. Having settled this, he proceeds with calm and quiet precision to note the more important of life's changes. And so, by-and-by, death rises before him, a cold, pale spectre from another world—yet fearfully present in this world—whose presence scares away even those other spectral shapes that haunt life's change-peopled chambers. It may be that we are

slow to place before us this arch-spirit of earthly change—death. The mind, without questioning, revolts instinctively from recognising the fact of death's existence or importance. If any one of us were to hear a person speak, in vague and general terms, about life's changes, and how sad and solemn they are; whilst our whole soul went with the speaker, and we taxed our daily experience to attest his truth, our mind would very likely fix in its transit on lesser changes of life, to the suppression, if not the exclusion, of the great change of death. One would think of his family grown up, married, and gone away—a very shadowy family to him now; another would have a long sad story of riches flown, of wrongs done, or supposed to have been done him. Few families, few individuals, are without such doleful legends. A third would tell of blighted love and chilled affections tincturing life; and a thousand other instances of change would float through the minds of different persons. Each has his own little tale of earthly change, perhaps, locked up in his desk in certain old, faded, tear-stained letters; or locked within his seared soul, where they are graven in letters that will *never* fade; stamped on coins that fill another's treasures; reverberating in old homes that echo to strange footsteps; or whispered in each blade of grass that grows on lands alienated by ancient fraud from his inheritance. Even if death is brought into the catalogue, though we avoid the topic as much as possible, it is mostly to the graves of others that we look to illustrate the lesson of life's changes. And yet if we fairly think, there must be one more picture introduced, and that is the picture of each one's individual death. Yes—truth hard to welcome, and yet known to be so true!—to illustrate fully the book of thought, as it turns to the subject of

death, each of us must in fancy betake us to some quiet nook, be it in the village churchyard, the city burial-place, or the sequestered cemetery, and there, as though we saw our own epitaphs written, moralise upon our own decay. And then we are ready enough to exclaim, "Here is change indeed! now we have roused the master-spirit!" Yes, and if we can only raise the cowering head, and uncover the terror-stricken eyes, so as to look upon this terror of life, so often deemed life's tyrant, life's destroyer, it may be we shall find that it is not altogether what we had supposed it; terrible though it be, we shall find that childish fears had added something to the undoubted horrors of reality.

Death looks differently to the Christian and the worldly man. To the latter it is only fear, to the former wholesome fear still, but yet much hope bound up with fear is inspired by death, the spirit of change. Such is our present subject. Summoned from the cold grave, behold the form of this wondrous spirit of change! We have all seen him, with the eye of fancy at least, either as hovering over our own sick-bed, or, more visibly still, swooping hawk-like down and bearing off our beloved. But have we dared to look on him? Have we looked with Christian eyes? If so, what have been his varied aspects? Let us picture him. In other words, let us note in some few particulars how the Christian will regard the great change of life—life's end—death.

1. Death is a terrible and a fearful thing. No doubt of it. It would be idle to affirm otherwise. Oh yes, death is terrible; whether memory or imagination fill up the items of terror. When memory takes us by the hand, and leads us silently back into the buried past, down the vista of our own bygone histories, what blanks, and voids, and empty homes, and vacant chairs has she not to point to! Whence came all this ruin? Death made it. Life to many has become like our native island, studded with its thousand ruined abbeys. Such is the havoc which death makes in the heart's holy homes. Memories throng the musing soul to tell how one by one those sacred scars were dented in upon it. It points us back to the time when we experienced that strange sensation, *the first loss of one we loved*. There is the record of a great fight of afflictions, perhaps awfully brief, or it may be wearily protracted, as our friend fought it out with the last enemy. And then the change came—the change which we call death. And do we not remember how our own intense nerves relaxed as that lamp of life went out? Then, too, it may be, we learnt one other of those lessons which life, no doubt, was meant to teach us: *the exceeding beauty and majesty of death*. We saw those who perhaps in life, even to us who loved them, were

plain or ordinary-looking, suddenly beautified and ennobled by the magic touch of death. The delicate pallor such as no artist ever delineated; the softening down of all harsh features in the brief relaxation that precedes the rigour of decay—these are elements in that "rapture of repose" which so fully describes the look of the dead. But the beauty is indescribable, inexplicable, as little dreamed of as the causes which produce it, and these lie behind the dark curtain. Yes, death is strangely beautifying in the change—the momentary alteration it suffuses into the spirit's old home. But still, beautiful as it is, it is the beauty of desolation, and such beauty trenches on terror. With so much of darkness as even Gospel revelation has left veiling the condition of the departed, there is no question but death must be terrible. Strip it of all its attendant horrors, and there is still the fact that it is to some extent *the making a step in the dark*. We have all felt this when we have seen a person one moment breathing, living, the next moment dead. "*Where is he now?*" This is the *natural* feeling, the instinctive conduct with regard to death, which faith, though it tempers, does not root out or do away with altogether. Death is terrible; and we fear it, and should fear it, though our faith and love were a thousand fold what they now are, because it is *a change to an unknown condition of existence*. It wears the semblance of annihilation; and from this the natural feeling revolts. Such set we down to be death's first aspect—one of terror. As an awful blank, the body shrinks from it; as the body often trembles at recitals the mind does not altogether accept.

2. There is, however, another and a higher aspect under which death presents itself, not only to the Christian, but to mankind in general. This great change is to some an object of desire, a thing to be sought rather than avoided. Very likely few of us have known what it is to think thus of death, but, beyond question, there are persons who really wish to die, should it please God to take them. And supposing that we are really Christians—that is, that we have thrown forward our heart's best hopes into the world to come; supposing, as we must suppose, that we believe all God has revealed to us of the happiness that lies stored up for us until the time when we shall have put off our present corruptible bodies—is not death a thing to be desired in itself, and for ourselves? We say not that the body will not always shrink from it: it is natural that it should do so. But when thought is sent far down into the inner being, to hold deep converse with the spirit, whose talk is ever of immortal hopes and fears, then is there not another shape under which death is pictured to us? It is transformed and transfigured. The terrible spirit becomes a calm,

happy angel, just as in the old Greek mythology the god of death and the god of the sunshine were one and the same. When thus we retire within ourselves, as into some quiet church, we experience pleasurable relief from the noise and bustle of the world; and there we find a Preacher, stern yet silver-voiced, to tell us from the Gospel page that thus it will be when life's changes are swallowed up in death. And then, however we may still wish to live on, and feel it necessary to live, and our duty to others as well as to ourselves to seek and strive to live, still death shows very lovely when thought of thus. It is the workman's Saturday night, ushering in the quiet Sabbath morn. It is only a slumber, calm but profound as an infant's. It is the setting of the sun to rise again on other scenes behind night's curtain of clouds and darkness.

If death be the great change, it is also, here at least, the end of change. In the former shape the body dreads it; in the latter the spirit desires it. To say nothing of all those higher expectations with which faith fills the believer's soul, there is the fact, answering to one of the very deepest of our spiritual necessities, that death is final as regards the vexations, the distractions—in one word, the "changes" of life. It is this second, this spiritual view of death, as a rest from labours, which must be present to a man's mind before such words as "to die is gain," "to depart and be with Christ is far better," can be anything more than mere texts in his mouth. Yet, unspiritual as life may be, it is to be questioned whether there ever was a man who has not, at some time, thought of death thus, under its happier aspect, as the end of change.

3. But there is still another view of the case, concerning death as the great change and the end of changes, which is the most important of all—*Death is the antechamber of judgment*. Were it only true that the body feared death, and the spirit desired it, then to seek death might almost seem a duty, certainly a luxury. But this third feature acts as a counterbalancing influence and a salutary check on any temptations which may induce a man to alter the condition of change God has imposed upon him, and to seek that haven's calm before his time. Man must understand that the calm which is delicious in the harbour, when life's voyage is over, would be fatal to the barque in mid sea. Therefore God has revealed to us the judgment to come, and bound up thoughts thereof inseparably with the idea of death. He has told us that, to all practical purposes, the lying down in death is the rising up to judgment. Could we be certain that death were the end of all change, there would be scarcely a phase of terror on this its spiritual side. But though active change ends with death, passive change outlives the grave.

Our state *shall* change after death; but the difference between this change and the changes of life will be, amongst other particulars, principally in the fact that we ourselves shall have no voice, no agency, no instrumentality in effecting or controlling this change.

Thus, then, we have considered death under a threefold form: (1) As *the last great change of life*; and so dreaded by body and mind. (2) As *the end of change*; and thus an object of desire to the spirit. (3) As *the antechamber of judgment*; and in this respect fearful alike to body, soul, and spirit.

Now, now is it to be expected that this triple force will act on life? First of all, these characteristics of death, solemn as they all are, *cast their shadows on life*. They give it seriousness. What a purposeless thing were existence to those who deemed themselves placed here simply to live, and death to be the mere cessation of life! No, we are not placed in the world half so much to live as to die. Life is a training for death; this world the school for heaven.

In the second place, solemn as life is, right views of death will loosen our hold upon it. They will teach us the difficult art of using this world—using life—without abusing it. The same process of argument which leads us to make the most of every hour that is given to us, will forbid us to grasp at length of days or be anxious about anything earth can give.

Again—and this perhaps of all others is the most *Christianising* effect that death exercises on life: it makes our attitude *expectant*; we wait. All our joys, sorrows, avocations, honours, are, so to say, parenthetical, inserted between two fixed points, birth and death. Life's work gets to be looked at as something temporary, something to be laid down as soon as more important matters call for our attention. Here come in the words: "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, *until my change come*." This tells us that the life we now live is not the end of our creation. We wait, as those who travel wait for the ship to sail or the train to start. "A little while," and a painful good-bye will have to be said to our knot of friends, and we go away. When that time comes, the tedious tarrying will be over. Events will succeed to expectation. Death, resurrection, judgment, are the mighty events which we shall witness and act our part in. Now we are, as it were, only walking down to the ship. Truly has it been said that "the grave is not the goal." Of our weary pilgrimage it is the goal, and by the efforts we make here shall our future fate be decided. But still, until the moment of our summons comes, we are expectant, waiting the Lord's voice.

Finally, impressed with these ideas we shall speak of death as our *change*. That is the Chris-

tian translation of a worldly notion. I hold it but Christian courtesy to speak and think thus of the departed; not as the dead, but as the "*changed*." It is our heart's creed that they are *not* dead, whether they be even sleeping (as we deem sleep) we know not. The word *changed* at once expresses their condition, as far as we can trace it, and is a humble confession of our ignorance beyond.

But, O ye parted ones, for whom the veil hath been drawn aside, who see—even if still but partially, yet how far more perfectly, more intensely than we who are burdened with the flesh, it were terrible indeed to deem you *dead*! Rather

is it we who are dead, you who live. We know that you exist apart from those dear bodies we laid so reverently in the grave, though in what high natures, in what conditions of repose, we cannot tell. The great change has passed upon you; the change we yet expect. Did we think of you as *dead*, we might cling to the life you have left behind, but as it is, we almost long to join you in circles once more unbroken. The body ceases to fear when the spirit begins to hope. But He who hath called you away hath left us here. His will be done. We tarry not long, in any case. In patience possess we our souls, waiting our appointed time, until *our* change—like yours—come.

SPANISH MARTYRS.

WES, the noble host of martyrs
Worship Thee!
Riseth solemnly and slowly
That grand vision! Sufferers holy,
Earth-rejected, scorned, and lowly,
Yet triumphant, bow the knee.

Bow, but not to priestly mandate,
Or in fear.
Not to saint or statue kneeling,
Pour they now their soul's deep feeling;
For the might sustaining, healing,
Of an unseen Cross is near.

Feeble children, tender women,
All are there;
Mingling in yon battle glorious,
In the warfare so laborious;
Toiling, striving, and victorious,
Through the might of faith and prayer.

Mail-clad warriors, crested heroes,
Ye were brave;
But ye drained not sorrow's vial,
Bore not shame and wrong and trial
With such holy self-denial!
Yours was not the martyrs' grave.

Tales of chivalry and glory
Haunt thee, Spain;
Beam-like o'er thy snow-crests shiver,
Murmur in each rushing river,
Through thy groves of orange quiver
Like some faintly-echoed strain.

But thy prophesying martyrs—
Ah! 'tis they
Who have won thy brightest glory,
Who have traced a deathless story
On thy page, in letters gory,
That no years shall fade away;

Echoing since dark Torquemada,
Demon-souled,
Strove in blood to quench the splendour
Of love's faith, sublime and tender,
Or its high-souled courage render
But a name, by man controlled;

Strove in vain! The stone-paved furnace
Telleth well
Of their life-sealed witness—meekness;
How Christ's strength in mortal weakness
Triumphed, ere asleep they fell.

They, of whom earth was not worthy—
Sin-crushed earth!—
They whose memories teach, like sages,
Lessons grand to after-ages,
Shading o'er the fitful rages
Of life's fevered war and mirth.

Waving plume, bright robe, and banner
Now are dust.
Fiery breath of valour olden,
Knightly step, and rowel golden
In decay hath Time enfolden;
But for ever lives their trust.

Bear ye on, as they have borne them;
Suffer still,
Till ye see the fetters cloven;
Ever some it hath behoven
In the vanguard to be proven
And from sorrow cometh skill.

Bear your part; for men and angels
Scan you now.
Closed the fight, shall ope heaven's portal,
And the crown of life immortal
Sparkle o'er each victor's brow.

A. BOND.

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“—— The stone-paved furnace
Telleth well
Of their life-sealed witness”—p. 72.

THE MAN WITHOUT A MASTER.

BY THE REV. P. B. POWER, M.A., AUTHOR OF "THE OILED FEATHER," "THE BAG OF BLESSINGS," ETC.

CHAPTER II.



R. COTTLE'S cake having been duly made to his entire satisfaction, that worthy individual sent it over to his sister, with the intimation that he himself meant to follow it, and to go to tea with her that evening. He further intimated that it was his intention, then and there, to discuss the future of her son Thomas, who was now quite old enough to have his plans in life fixed.

This latter part of the note much perplexed and troubled poor Mrs. Toskins, who knew that her son and his uncle were not likely to agree on the subject in question; however, the cake was a good omen, and she did not tell Tom of the company he was to have that evening. Had she done so, that youth would, most probably, have asserted his independence by taking himself right off, no one knew where.

"That's a jolly cake, Uncle Cottle," said Tom, in anything but the tone of voice which that worthy individual approved of; "a jolly cake; I wish you'd send us one over oftener; we don't make many of those things here. I say, mother, why don't you toss us up something like that now and again, 'twould make a fellow like to come home to tea?"

"You approve of the cake, do you?" said Mr. Cottle, drawing it towards him, and laying the knife by his own plate. For Mr. Cottle intended with that cake to illustrate the apostolic maxim, that if a man did not work neither should he eat; consequently, it would never have done to let his nephew help himself, thereby utterly destroying the illustration, and the chance of having his memory impressed.

"Certainly," said Tom, "I call it a jolly cake."

"And pray, young man, will you tell me how that cake came into the world?"

"That's no affair of mine," said Tom, "so as 'tis there for me to eat, that's all I'm concerned about."

"Indeed," said Mr. Cottle, "and plum-cakes, all ready and mixed and baked and frosted, the materials of which might be said to come from all parts of the world, are to be put on the table for Mr. Thomas Toskins to eat. Now, let me tell you, young man, that if you expect plum-cakes, or quartern-loaves, or breakfast, dinner, or tea to be put on your table without its being any affair of yours, you make a very great mistake.

"It was the affair of a great many people to produce the flour that this cake was made of; and a great many more to produce the butter, to say

nothing of the plums, and sugar, and firing, and so forth; and now let me tell you, young man, that if you expect all these people to work for you for nothing, you make, as I have said, a very great mistake. We're not independent of one another in this world, and the Almighty never intended that we should be; and now, as I am here, I should like to know what you intend to do with yourself."

"Well, I don't want to do anything particular," replied Tom.

"Exactly so," said Mr. Cottle, "because if you do anything particular, you must have a master over you; but people who don't do something particular in life, in general don't do anything at all; and all I can tell you is, that I've made up my mind not to help your mother any more until she gets rid of you; I have no notion of feeding a great strapping fellow like you, especially on plum-cake;" and hereupon, Mr. Cottle cut the one before him into two, exposing the most delicious medley of plums, citron, and all sorts of good things to view.

"Now, this cake has more to do with you, young man, than you suppose;" whereupon Mr. Cottle candidly confessed how great his wrath had been; and how he had upset the half-quartern of flour; and gathered up the remnants and made this cake thereof. "I thought, Tom Toskins, to throw you over, and have nothing more to do with you; but I thought, 'Why should a fellow-creature be wasted? if 'tis a sin to waste a half-quartern of flour, how much greater a sin is it to waste a human being, and that human being one's own nephew?' so I thought I would try what could be done with you; and as that flour has come out into this cake, so you may come yet to something good.

"Now, I'll just tell you at once what it is. If you take to some occupation in a regular way, I'll stand your friend now; and by-and-by"—But here Tom's uncle suddenly drew up; he thought he might as well not say too much; so he merely thrust his two hands deep into his breeches-pockets, and fumbled about with some odd change and a bunch of keys, which he had there—the idea being, to suggest that Mr. Cottle was worth money, and that some day he must die, and could not take his money with him; and that, under those circumstances, it might enter his head that he had a nephew, to whom what was about to be no longer of use to the uncle, would be of great use indeed; and lest Tom should not take in these various ideas, or should not make enough of them if he did, the old man appeared to be in a reverie

for awhile—apparently calculating how much it would be worth to any man to be his only nephew and heir; out of which temporary trance he allowed the small public before him to know that he had come, by his saying, half meditatively, looking up at the ceiling, and drawing his hands from his pockets, “There may be worse things in the world than being—Cottle’s nephew.”

It was Mr. Cottle’s theory that everything should be given time to digest, more especially if it were tough; accordingly he said no more this evening, or, at least but very little, on this subject of his nephew Thomas going forth into active life. One helping of such unpalatable food was quite enough at a time; so he told Tom to sleep over the matter, and come to him the next morning. In saying this, Mr. Cottle did not reflect that he was giving his nephew about the hardest thing possible for a young man in his state of mind to do. “Sleep on it, indeed,” said Thomas Toskins to himself; “’tis about the very thing to prevent my going to sleep. ’Tis more likely to keep me awake, than to put me asleep. Uncle Jonas may sleep, and snore over it, too, if he likes, but I shan’t trouble my head over the matter.”

Thomas Toskins made many attempts to sleep that night, but with no success; the jingling of whatever Uncle Jonas had in his pocket kept sounding in his ears, and it seemed to say to him, “Remember, Thomas Toskins, that you are Mr. Jonas Cottle’s nephew; and that a time must come when the aforesaid Jonas must depart this life; and that he can’t take anything—no, not to the value of a penny bun—with him; and, as he must leave it behind, he may as well leave it to you; therefore, don’t vex him, when you can avoid doing so, just by stirring on a bit.”

The upshot of all these thoughts was that Tom determined to do something; only, whatever it was, and however hard he worked, he would be independent—he would be his own master; if he couldn’t be so in one place, why he’d leave it, and go to another; and, so long as he was professedly doing something, he hoped his uncle would be satisfied.

When morning came, Tom, under the persuasive influence of that jingling which had so opportunely taken place inside his uncle’s pocket, presented himself before that worthy man, and announced his intention of carrying out his wishes.

The baker, though inwardly surprised at his nephew’s coming round so soon, did not in the least express his astonishment; to do so would have been bad for his nephew’s mind, whose only impression ought to be, that he had simply done what was the right thing. “And now, nephew,” said Mr. Cottle, “I’ll look out for a situation for you.”

“But why can’t I stay and work here?” said Tom.

“Better begin like any one else,” said the baker; “folk don’t always do best with their own kith and kin. I have a friend in this line in London, and he’ll take you, I know, to please me; so get your mother to look after your traps at home, and in a week’s time you’ll be at work.”

Mr. Jonas Cottle determined that he himself would take his nephew to town; and not only so, but that he would remain there a few days, to see if that independent youth would take kindly to the collar, and go in harness without kicking and plunging, as sooner or later most of mankind are compelled to do.

Accordingly he wrote to his friend, offering him a premium with the youth, and proposing, if it were agreeable to Mrs. Kinloch’s feelings, that he should stay with them for a few days.

Tom was to board and lodge in the house, but Mr. Jonas felt that he should like to be there himself to see the start; and also, at suitable times between whiles in business, to have a little conversation with Mr. and Mrs. Kinloch on their new inmate’s character. “’Tis a great thing,” said Mr. Jonas, “for folk to start fair—to know something of one another—that’s how I’ve got on so well with Mrs. Cottle, these—let me see,” said Mr. Cottle, musing for a moment, “five-and-twenty years, come next 24th of May, at three minutes past eleven o’clock in the morning, at St. Martin’s Church—we started fair, that we did, right out of the church—no—the vestry door; and we’ve been going fair ever since; and I’ll try and start Tom. Poor fellow! poor fellow! bad habits, caught from his father! ay, ay, bad habits aint in the air; no, no, they’re catching from one man to another, and that’s one reason why a man shouldn’t have them; but if a man don’t care for himself, we needn’t wonder if he don’t for other people, even though they were his own flesh and blood. But we’ll see—we’ll see what can be made of Tom. I wasted a deal of that flour by giving it such a crack with the knife, we did pretty well though with what was left; but the thing is not to waste at all; we must gather up what is left of Tom.” And with these benevolent ideas, Mr. Jonas Cottle accompanied his nephew Thomas to London.

Mr. Jonas Cottle has now arrived in London, and is seated at tea with his old friends, Mr. and Mrs. Kinloch; to speak more properly, he is seated after tea; and Tom is in the shop, all eyes, looking out on the interminable traffic flowing past the baker and confectioner’s door.

“Well, friend,” said Mr. Kinloch, “you must set great store by this youth to offer us so handsome a premium with him.”

“He’s my only sister’s only boy,” said the country baker. “That made me do something; and he’s a trifle headstrong and self-willed, I thought

it right to put down something for the trouble you might have with him on that score; and I knew it was something of a compliment, your taking him; so, putting everything together, I don't think it is too much."

"And high spirits is all that's the matter with the youth?" inquired the London baker.

"Tisn't what people call high spirits, but a high spirit; you must cut off the 's,'" said Mr. Cottle, "and that's doing a good deal. And this high spirit has, as is often the case, a good deal of obstinacy and self-will, ay, and selfishness, and what I call headstrongedness connected with it. Why, would you believe it," said Mr. Cottle, "the boy thinks he'll be his own master; he'll do as he likes, he won't have any blinkers on his eyes, or saddle on his back, or girth round his body, or bit in his mouth, not he, 'tis all oats with him; dear, dear, I don't know what is to be done with him!"

"And, I suppose, if he won't have the blinkers, and the girth, and the bit, of course he won't have a drag to keep him back when he's going down hill, nor a whip when he has to go up one?"

"Certainly not, my dear sir," said Mr. Cottle, "he decidedly objects to anything of that sort; I should say he would kick and jib, and be generally dangerous if anything of the kind were tried upon him. 'Tis in the blood, caught from his father, Mr. Kinloch; people say his 'poor father,' but I, when I say 'poor,' I say his 'poor mother and sister,' for that man kept them poor enough, I warrant you. But we can't let things go on in this way; and I've brought him to you to see if you can break him in. But you won't hurt him," said Mr. Cottle, who had a very tender heart, despite his present indignation with his nephew; "he's my only sister's only boy, and she is a widow, and I shouldn't like him to get too much of the whip."

"My dear Mr. Cottle," answered the London baker, "you leave that boy with me; I see how matters are, and I'll do what I can. You've brought him to me to see if I can break him in. Well, perhaps I can, and perhaps I can't; and the one perhaps is as likely as the other; but one thing I can tell you for certain, he *can* be broken in; the thing *can* be done. Providence has its own way of breaking in people. I should say I have been broken in myself, though I've a deal that is wild about me still."

"Sandy," said Mrs. Kinloch, in a tone partly of incredulity that so steady a man as her Sandy ever could have anything wild about him, or, indeed, ever have been wild, even at the remotest period of his history; and partly of alarm, for if her husband had anything really wild about him, there was no knowing in what strange way, and at what strange times it might come out,

"Sandy," said Mrs. Kinloch, "ye'r as meek as any lamb; don't say sich wicked things as that ye'r wild noo, or ever were at any period of your life."

"Ay, ay, Janet, I was wild—I wanted to go my own way often enough; and what's that but breaking out of the Lord's yoke, as if he didn't know the way that was best for us? and often I'm wild now with kickings and plungings when things go wrong; as if these weren't the ways we're taught that we're not to be our own master and have everything as we like."

"Well, but, Sandy, mon, I never saw ye were fretty, much less angry."

"Ah! woman, ye couldn't see inside, the kicking and plunging was all done there; I've broken out fearfully wild many a time in there, but I'm learning every day more and more that I'm not my own master. There's one Great Master, Mr. Cottle, you know who he is; he's the Head Master over all; and he has many masters under him; and he passes us from one to another: have no fear, Mr. Cottle, but that he'll take your nephew in hand, if you have prayed to him to do so; only let him do it in his own way; be that way rough or smooth, long or short. 'Tis a good thing to remember that we have nothing to do with *how* it pleases God to bring things about; times, and seasons, and ways are his. I have no doubt that your nephew Thomas will be broken in."

"That is the point, sir," said Jonas Cottle, "that is the point; and so the thing is done I'm not altogether too particular about the way, we'll leave that, Mr. Kinloch; only I shouldn't like any one to be too hard on him, for you know, sir, his mother is a widow—and—and—widows mustn't be too hard dealt with, and—and," said Mr. Cottle, quickly, as though, under ordinary circumstances, he should have ended here, but now a new thought had struck him, "and, sir, his mother is my sister, and, therefore, a part, so to speak, of myself; and, if she is, this boy, Tom, is; he's my nephew, Mr. Kinloch, and Mrs. Cottle's nephew; ah; that's another reason. I like anything belonging to Mrs. Cottle to be taken care of; and if only the youth can be got to get rid of his foolish notions of independence, he shall come in for something;" and Mr. Cottle rattled his keys and small change in his trousers-pocket. The thought, however, struck the worthy man, that something may mean anything; and indeed, that, unfortunately in the matter of what was left to folk, it frequently turned out almost nothing; and, that Mr. Kinloch ought not to be left in a vague and uncertain state of mind on this subject; perhaps if he knew Tom's expectations he might take all the more trouble with him. Mr. Jonas, therefore, thought it well to add a word or two, giving more specific information on this subject.

After just opening the door with the smallest possible slit, and peeping through to make sure that Tom was not within earshot, Mr. Jonas drew his chair confidentially close to his friend's, and said, "We do fourteen sacks a week, besides confectionary and Horniman's uncoloured tea; we are agents for Pop's celebrated ginger beer, and Tart's pure raspberry vinegar, and Candy's crystallised fruits; and we were asked, sir, by the chief dairy in our town to keep their curds and whey, but that line we declined, sir, with thanks—I merely mention it to show what kind of business ours is; and I mean to retire in proper time and let Thomas take my place, if only he can be broken in; for if he's his own master in his own fashion, he'll want to be master over his customers—and then the Cottle business will go to the dogs, and Tom too."

"Yes, I mean to let him in, while I'm alive and

well—I don't mean any lawyer to meddle with it; or the Crown to get twopence out of it; I mean to do it all myself in my lifetime; Mrs. Cottle and I, we'll both do it, and then retire to a cottage over the way and see how Tom gets on. We shan't be jealous of him, Mrs. Kinloch; no, not if he has a wife and eight children. We once thought we should have liked to have a little boy ourselves, Mrs. C. said, 'just to call Jonas after me;' and I thought just to 'keep up the name of 'Cottle' in the place; but we can dispense with all that; Tom's eldest boy shall be called Jonas, and he shall keep the name of 'Cottle' over the door—but," said the worthy baker, "we're going too fast. Tom must be broken in first; he mustn't, as he'd like, have folk saying of him, 'There goes the man without a master.'"

(To be continued.)

CURIOSITIES OF PARISH REGISTERS.

IN TWO PARTS.

PART I.



FAMILIAR and much-valued relics in most of our English parishes are the volumes of the registers of births, deaths, and marriages. Containing as they do a mine of information duly valued and explored by the genealogist and the antiquary, they also possess, as we hope to show, some little interest even for persons whose duties, pursuits, or inclinations do not lead them to study with patient accuracy such records of what we are pleased to call the "good old times." These quaint, mildewed tomes, with their limp, yellow vellum leaves bristling with inscriptions of which the antiquated and straggling characters are brown with age, have a history of their own apart from that of their contents.

How many joys and sorrows occasioned, how many lives blessed or blighted, how many hopes and fears realised, were incident to the births and deaths and marriages which they record, we shall never know. The old registers tell us hard facts, and that is all. The resultant good or ill is unrelated, and must remain unknown until the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed.

In the present paper we propose to give a sketch of what may be called the external history of parish registers in England, together with some curious facts relating to their vicissitudes and their contents.

It is not a little remarkable that the first establishment of regular parochial registers in England dates from the Reformation. When it was enacted, in the reign of Henry VIII., that the Church of England should no longer be subject to the Pope,

Thomas Cromwell was appointed the King's vicegerent for ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and in that capacity issued an injunction to the clergy, ordaining that every officiating minister should for every church keep one book, or register, wherein he should write the day and year of every wedding, christening, and burial made within his parish for his time, and also insert every person's name that should be so wedded, christened, and buried. "And for the saufe keeping of the same booke the parrishe shall be bound to provide of their common charges one sure coffer with two locks and keyes, whereof thone to remain with the parson, vicar, or curate, and thother with the wardeynes of every parrishe churche or chapell wherein the saide booke shall be laid up, whiche booke they shall, every Sunday, take furthe, and in the presence of the said wardeynes, or one of them, write and recorde in the same all the weddingys, christenyngs, and burialles made the hole week before, and that doan, to lay up the booke in the said cofer as before, and for every time that the same shall be omitted the partye that shall be in the faulte thereof shall forfeit to the said churche iijjs. iiijd., to be employed on the reparation of the saide churche."

This injunction was repeated in the reign of Edward VI., and again in that of Elizabeth, by whom a protestation was also appointed to be made by the clergy, by which, among other things, they promised to keep the register book in a proper manner.

The Canons of the Church of England which are now in force date their authority from the beginning of the reign of James I. (1603). In one of

them very minute directions are given as to the manner in which entries were to be made in the parish register books, which it enjoined should be of *parchment*, and provided by the parish; and that all the ancient registers, "especially since the beginning of the reign of the late Queen (Elizabeth)," should be copied into them. To this wise regulation, which seems to have been carried into full effect at the time, we probably owe the preservation of some of the most ancient and interesting of the registers; and those now extant usually commence with Elizabeth's reign. The clause of the canon directing that the register book should be kept in a coffer in the church was not usually enforced, it having been found by experience that the book was liable to be damaged by the moisture which prevails in uninhabited buildings, especially those constructed of "weeping" stone. In the parish register of Rodmarton, in Gloucestershire, is an inscription in Latin, to the effect that "Jobus Yate, Rector Ecclesiæ de Rodmarton in Comit. Glouc.," caused the book to be made at the expense of the parish, "Feb. 3, 1630, stylo novo—i.e., Januar 24, Anglicano Veteri;" and then there follows in English:—

"If you will have this book last, bee sure to air it att the fier or in the sunne three or foure times a yeare, els it will grow dankish and rott, therefore look to it. It will not bee amisse, when you finde it dankish, to wipe over the leaves with a dry wollen cloath. This place is very much subject to dankishness; therefore I say, looke to it."

The register books were in practice usually kept at the house of the officiating minister, and in his custody, or if the incumbent were not resident, at that of the parish clerk. This will account for the strange vicissitudes which some of the books underwent, and of which we shall give some account later on.

During the Commonwealth an Act of Parliament was passed providing for a careful registration, "in a book of good vellum," of all births, deaths, and marriages in each parish by "some able and honest person chosen by the inhabitants and householders," who was to be a sworn officer, and who should subscribe the entries in the presence of a justice of the peace. This plan would seem to have worked well, but at the Restoration matters relapsed into their former state, and the registration of births, deaths, and marriages reverted into the hands of the clergy, who continued to rule the destinies of registration down to the establishment of the Registrar-General's Department in the year 1836, when an Act of Parliament provided for the establishment of "a proper office in London or Westminster, to be called 'the General Register Office,' for keeping a register of all births, deaths, and marriages of His Majesty's subjects in England, and to appoint

for the said office, under the Great Seal of the United Kingdom, a Registrar-General." That such an institution was not established before it was needed is evidenced by the following testimony of a learned judge, given only three years before the establishment of the Registrar-General's Department.

At the York assizes, in the year 1833, on the trial of *Doe v. Hungate*, a case of considerable notoriety in Yorkshire, in which a large estate was at stake, Mr. Serjeant Jones, who was counsel for one of the parties, observed that an obliteration appeared in a register which was produced, whereupon Baron Alderson, who tried the cause, observed, "Are you surprised at that, Brother Jones? I am not not at all surprised. I have had much experience, and I *never saw a parish registry book in my life that was not falsified in some way or other, and I do not believe there is one that is not.*"

The registers were not only falsified, but they were scandalously kept in some instances; for example:—In the year 1819 it was necessary, for purposes connected with the sale of a certain property, that proof of the death of one Mrs. Gouldsmith should be forthcoming. She was known to have been buried at Waldon, in Sussex, and search was accordingly made in the parish register. The death was not entered; but on going to the parish clerk, who was a blacksmith, he stated that he recollected the circumstance, and accounted for the non-entry of her burial in this way:—He said it was usual for him, and not the clergyman, to take an account of those who were buried, and he entered them in a little sixpenny memorandum-book after the following fashion:—"A. B., £1." If it so happened that the fee to the clerk was paid at the time, as was the case with affluent persons, no entry would appear in his book; *he only booked what was due to him, and as the clergyman entered the parish register at the end of the year from his book, and not at the time of the ceremony, all burials that were not entered in his book would not find their way into his register.* Mrs. Gouldsmith being in affluent circumstances he thought this must have been the case.

Some remarkable instances of the careless manner in which the registers were kept came to light during an inquiry into the general state of parochial registers, which was directed by the House of Commons about forty years ago. An incumbent at Lewes kept the old registers in a cupboard in his house, where the children or any one else could have got at them and from which they were fetched when a search was wanted, and the modern ones at the house of the parish clerk, very much exposed to accidental fires. In some registers parts were destroyed, whole leaves being cut out. An instance was

given where the clerk was about to destroy the old register, saying "it was of no use," but was fortunately prevented; and in another parish the clerk stated that the clergyman "used to direct his pheasants with the parchment of the old registers."

A gentleman from the Heralds' College sent to a clergyman in the country for extracts from the register, whereupon he cut them out and sent them by post, saying, he "could make nothing of them." Three parish registers were once found among some rubbish at the Heralds' College, and the original registers of the marriages at Somerset House, containing, amongst other entries several relating to the family of the Earl of Radnor, were purchased by an eminent antiquary at the sale of a printseller's effects at Christie and Manson's. In the parish of Barby the register was actually burnt by the clergyman, a son of the former incumbent. He entered his own baptism on the fly-leaf of the new register and burnt the old one. In a parish where there had not been a resident clergyman for a length of time, the register was kept by the parish clerk, whose daughter was a lace-maker; she made use of all the old registers for her lace parchments, and some of the leaves were actually found upon her cushion!*

* Since this paper has been in type, the following "Occasional Note" in the *Pall Mall Gazette* of August 8, 1870, has come under the notice of the writer, and may be not unaptly quoted here:—"As the attention of Parliament has just been directed to the need of providing safer custody for ecclesiastical records, the Bishop of Lichfield's inquiry into the abstraction of a leaf from the register of a parish within his diocese is very opportune. It appears that there has been cut out of the register of Hope, in Derbyshire, a page containing the entries of marriage between September, 1745, and August, 1768, and that the duplicate register in the custody of the Bishop's chancellor has been similarly treated. There can be no question that the injury has been done lately and for a malicious purpose, and it is asserted that the missing page contains the record of a marriage which, if proved, would be of material importance to the claimant of the earldom of Newburgh. The careless manner in which this class of documents has been treated has constantly invited the perpetration of similar acts of fraud. In 1820 W. Radcliffe was tried at York for forging an entry in the register

In one instance a question arose respecting the baptism of a gentleman who was baptised by the name of Anketil Grey. On first searching the register when he was baptised they could not find his name, and searches were made in other registers also in vain; but on a closer examination of the original register where it was expected to be entered, they found him enrolled as "Miss Ann Kettle Grey."

At East Markham, in Nottinghamshire, a parish clerk made old pages legible with fresh ink, and one date was falsified. At Clee St. Margaret, in Shropshire, the registers prior to 1813 were all very much defaced and mutilated, having in some places whole pages, and in others single entries, cut out. At Washenburgh, in Lincolnshire, there were no entries of burials from 1748 to 1758, the rector being, as was reported, frequently *non compos*! In a Bedfordshire parish register several leaves were deficient, parts of them having been cut out, and the mutilations made apparently by children who had scribbled and drawn figures over the pages. At Waynefleet, in Lincolnshire, the register had been mutilated apparently to write bills on, as a *butcher's bill remains on part of the last leaf*. In Lincoln's Inn Chapel there is an entry by a clergyman in the following words: "Married a couple this day, whose names I could never learn, as they carried away the licence."

A clergyman in Worcestershire detected an individual who came to his church with his mouth full of parchment, nearly chewed to pieces. It was a page of the parish register, which for some dishonest reason it was his interest to destroy.

(To be continued.)

of Ravensfield, with a view to proving his descent from the Earls of Derwentwater, and his title to their forfeited estates. Though found guilty, he escaped with a slight penalty, for the forgery of a marriage entry of a date previous to 1753 is only a misdemeanour, while that of an entry subsequent to that date is a felony. The parish register is sometimes called 'The Poor Man's Charter,' but it is surely a document in the preservation of which both rich and poor are equally interested."

THE TWO CRIPPLES.



YOU want to know why I keep that horrid, common lame sparrow, do you, Harry? and why I make such a fuss over him? Well, if you can keep still for five minutes, I will tell you his story. Three years ago I was walking along a poor miserable street, when I heard a sweet voice above my head singing "The Mocking-bird." It was long since I had heard such fresh young notes, and I was pleased to find they came from the garret of the house I was going to. When I had finished the business which took me there, I asked who was the

singer, and was told, "Oh, that's poor Jem Robson, a cripple; he and his mother have the top attic."

I made my way up and found Jem alone. His mother, who was his sole support, went out to sew, and poor Jem was left by himself almost every day. When he was quite a baby he had had a terrible fall, which had injured his spine so much that he never was able to walk. He was now twelve years old, but his legs had grown quite thin, and he was hardly ever out of pain. His face was white and sickly, and had that sad look of deformity which so often accompanies a crooked back. I soon got him to talk

quite freely to me, and I asked him if he was not often very dull. "I was very low sometimes, ma'am," he said, "till Bob came to me."

"And who is Bob?" I said, for the child spoke as of some one present.

For answer, Jem gave a low whistle, and from the farthest corner of the room there came a lame sparrow.

Its hopping was a most painful process. I saw at once that one of its legs was broken. Its spirits, however, remained unimpaired. It came up at its little master's call, and perched itself on one of his small, wasted hands, and pecked gently at his lips as though it would give him a bird-kiss.

Jem then told me that some months ago his mother had left him one day laid by the window, so that he might see all that went on in the street below. While she was away, he watched the people coming and going, and wondered how he should feel if he could walk and run as they did. He noticed the children as they went to school, and thought within himself, "I shall never grow up a scholar, for I can never go to school, and no teacher will ever come to me." At last he saw a tiny child toddle into the middle of the road, where it fell flat down on its face. It would certainly have been run over had not a boy, just about Jem's own age, picked it up and carefully led it away. Then tears of disappointment rolled down the face of the cripple, who watched from his window this scene of life and action, of danger and of help. "Ah," he thought, "I could have borne to see people strong and happy, whilst I was dull and in pain, but it is hard to see them wanting help and to know that I can never give it. That baby might have been killed for anything I could have done; why did God let me live when he knew I should be always like this, and never any use in the world?"

Just then a lad looked in, whose parents lodged in a room below Jem's garret, and said, "I say, see what I've caught!"

He came close up to Jem, and opening his hand, showed him a wretched-looking, half-dead bird. He had been setting traps for sparrows, and *this* was the only one he had caught. It had struggled violently to get free, and in doing so had broken one of its slender legs.

"I shall kill it outright," said the boy.

"No, you shan't," said Jem, his pale face flushing all over with newly-awakened pity; "give it to me, I'll nurse it."

Then ensued much and close bargaining; for the sparrow instantly rose in value as soon as its captor perceived that its very misfortunes enhanced its value in Jem's eyes. Jem offered in exchange a long piece of string, an alley-tor, and a bit of lead pencil, all of which were treasures very dear to him. But his neighbour gradually increased his demands, till

at length Jem was compelled to sacrifice the bright, new fourpenny-piece which formed his sole capital. A kind-hearted district visitor had given it him on Christmas Day, and Jem had secretly intended to buy something for his mother with it, but pity was stronger than love, and Bob became Jem's sole charge in life.

With much difficulty the two boys bound up the broken leg, and Bob began life and education under Jem's guardianship. Jem soon taught the little creature to come at his call, to feed out of his hand, and to perform many little tricks at a word. I said to him once, "Why, Jem, what a great deal you have managed to teach Bob, he is quite a learned sparrow."

"Oh, ma'am," said Jem, "he has taught me more. I used to spend best part of my time grieving that I was a poor helpless cripple, and God sent Bob here to show me that a lame bird is more helpless than a lame boy. I learnt from Bob that even I could save life, and make some one happy that would have been miserable else. So we just do each other good. Bob sits and chirps and is as merry as a cricket, and whenever I feel a bit dull, I starts off singing to him, and Bob puts his head on one side, and listens and looks as if he was saying to himself, 'Yes, I remember something like that long ago in the parks amongst my relations there.' Bob and me was made for each other, I think, ma'am. I don't mind being a cripple now, for may be it would grieve Bob if he saw I could run about. He might feel like I did afore he came."

It was the terrible cholera year, and one evening they brought me word that Jem and his mother were both ill. I could not go that night, but the next morning I put on my bonnet and went to see them. They were both beyond my reach, and would never again feel pain or want. The woman in the next room came in to speak to me, and said, with many tears, "Poor Jem, we shall all miss him, with his poor pinched face and his sweet voice; and as for his bird, it's just heart-breaking to see it stand by and never lift up its head."

True enough, there was Bob standing on the miserable apology for a bed, where lay all that remained of his master and friend. His head drooped, so did his feathers, and not a chirp did he utter. When I put out my hand to take him away, he gave a cry almost like a child who is torn from its mother's arms, but I knew it must be done, and I did not let him go. I brought him home, and after many days he brightened up a little, though I am sure he has never forgotten poor Jem, for he never plays any of his old tricks. Now, Harry, you will understand why I am so fond of a common lame sparrow. Crippled Bob reminds me of crippled Jem, and teaches me lessons of patience and tenderness and love.

C. MILLER.